

The Importance of Oral Literature from the Perspective of Ethnology

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ABSTRACT

Literature is a cultural part of society which is included of education, believes, arts, morals, laws, disciplines, traditions, habits and capacity in the society. Oral literature is the oldest type of literature which has a great role in formation of classical literature. Literary genre in a geographical limitation helps to know the culture and tradition of its people. It would happen if we have deep insight of ethnology from perspective of oral literature. Ethnology helps to know social habits of the people through its myths, proverbs, articles, couplets, stories etc. as a result, we can say that oral literature has an important role in ethnology and without deep insight in oral literature and literary genres of literature knowing people would be not possible.

KEYWORDS

literature; importance; oral literature; ethnology

INTRODUCTION

“Folksier literature” can be defined as reflection of individuals, tribal, and social characteristics of every nation. The greatness of old and folksier literature of every homeland indicates the greatness of their culture in that nation. The people who are not aware about the culture and literature of his people, he cannot claim of being acquainted of his own ancient history. So, to know the history of the nations better, it should be taken more serious.

In this article, it is tried to clarify that what is the role of oral literature in ethnology? And what genres in oral literature can help the ethnology to know the people of a specific geography? Since the name of Afghanistan was Ariana and later on Khorasan, it had oral literature. Therefore, studying oral literature of Afghanistan is very important. While it was different in Greek and Mesopotamia civilizations. They used to write there believes and knowledge in visual, kinesthetic, lines, colors forms or in oral format as myths, stories, fables and songs. But unfortunately, the old culture and literature of Afghanistan is not available in written form. Therefore, the archaeologies and ethnologists should investigate more on this issue.

Ethnology depends on oral literature because by the knowing about life style, traditions, habits, social conditions, myths, proverbs, articles, couplets and stories of the people someone can easily know the people of a nation. In this article under the title of “*The Importance of Oral Literature from the Perspective of Ethnology*”, first of all, it is going to be discussed about oral literature and ethnology, then it is going to focus about the role of oral literature from the anthropological perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Oral Literature

Oral literature has been formed since social life and communication among human being has been extended. They have started to share their life experiences with each other. From the hunting and war to traditions and social relations with grim of beautiful nature the history of

human being has been created and oral literature has been being into existence mouth by mouth and hand by hand. In these primary narrations, human created songs and stories to reflect their victories, failings, loves, hates, mercies, angers, hopes and wishes as valuable heritage for their future generations.

The beauty and value of oral literature is the unfamiliarity of their authors and writers. The different stories and songs reflects imaginary conditions of the folks which have been taken from the centuries or they are tribal thoughts in a short form which have been taken from the deepest of the society and returned them back to the society.

It is not unreal to say that oral literature is mother for the written literature. This means human being has started to talk. Whatever human has seen, imagined and dreamed, they have been turned to speech. All types of lyrics, religious songs, stories, proverbs, cradlesongs, cruxes and etc....are the imaginations which has received from the nature to human and from human to society and from society to the future generations (Setoodah, 1383:50).

“Intellectual heritage, fictions and nonfictions traditions of the people which is usually in oral form and carried out from one generation to the next is called oral literature. There are some other expressions such as public literature, tribal literature and common literature which have been used for oral literature (Qanwati, 1387:92)”.

Oral literature which has been carried out mouth by mouth through narrators and their writers are not clear. They are used against written literature which have been written by recognized writers and speakers from long times ago up to now.

Oral literature is divided into myth, folksy song, proverb, cradlesong, fable, crux and etc. But, it is better to say that oral literature is oral speech or sounds which generally divided into two parts: myth and folksy song, then they are divided into subgroups such as proverbs, crux and expressions.

Folksy stories are a huge part of oral traditions which has special role in oral literature. Folksy stories which are the richest branch of oral literature consists of myths, stories of faeries, imaginary, historical and funny stories. The stories of animals are also included in this type of oral literature. The characteristics of folksy story are creating imaginary atmosphere which could be able to locate the listener in unrecognizable places to unveil the secrets. Sometimes, folksy are used as pieces of advices and discusses about evil and divine in unreal world which is not possible in a real world.

Folksy songs which are mixed with music reflects about life and environment that has its own language. Folksy song is very simple and fluent which listener can comprehend it easily. Simplicity in folksy songs narrates the way of simple communication in old society which complicated way of communication was not usual (Sadaat, 1357:20). It is worthy to be mentioned that realism is also a part of folksy songs.

On the other hand, proverbs have special role in arrangement of family and society. Proverbs can be used to reconcile two people to avoid being hate each other. Proverb can be used as a rule for those who do not perform his/her responsibility in the villages of Afghan society. Through using proverbs sometimes a disputation come to end or it persuades a person to be punctual for his/her responsibilities.

Cruxes are used for entertainment in free times which has visual forms and comes out from those who do not have much knowledge (Sadaat, 1377:60). All activities have contributed slight improvement to the student’s oral English proficiency score. However, the said activities did not improve their oral English proficiency level possibly due to some unknown factors that might have affected them during the duration of the study (Ulangkaya, Z. K, 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ethnology

“Anthropology” investigates about social life, intellectual life, physical characteristics, and cultural life of initial societies. We can say that ethnology reflects and investigates all aspects of human society that some of them are a life in contemporary society and some of them has been died (Farid, 1376:4).

Ethnology is defined as “the study about the culture of societies”; but anthropology is the study of racial, life style, traditions, social, economic and arts of different human from different countries and contents.

Rad Clif Brown who is an American ethnologist, according to geography and history which are means of getting into resources and publishing culture, relates the phrase ethnology to history of culture. As a result, we can say that “ethnology is a broad study and research about culture of a society”.

A questions is risen that what is different between ethnology and sociology? The answer is that sociology studies about a specific society to know about its structure and the changes in these structures. But, ethnology tries to find the differences in different societies. Specific society has been studied in ethnology to find what is different among societies (Tabibi, 1386:21).

As a general, we can find that ethnology wants to find about different tribes because a tribe is smaller and limit than a large society. Similarly, these types of tribes are more virginal.

To comprehend more about ethnology, it is a descriptive, visual and written tasks. Ethnology applies the documents of human events, translation and classification of important elements to study deeply about the society or organs of study. It is the responsibility of ethnology to work on documents which is gathered by the people. To achieve this goal, ethnology interpret and analyze these documents in opinion forms which stands on practical studies. It clarify and investigates them through characteristics of patterns (Rear, 1392:27).

Oral Literature and Ethnology

In a very beginning, human being felt responsible against society to find about unknown phenomenon. Among all these knowledge, awareness and experiences, human being tried to pave the ground for studying and investigations in different fields. Besides, humans always wanted to know their own behaviors in compare to others. As a result of these struggles and challenges, it has developed in long times and sociology has become to the scene which ethnology is its branch.

Research on ethnology covers all intellectual parts of life which is related to doctrines, feelings, and believes of the people which can be a subject in oral literature. Oral literature only pays on intellectual dimension of human life such as myths, tales, songs, and believes; so the researcher of oral literature have to consider this point while studying it. As it is not possible to remove traditional background from a culture and create something new in them, folklore is the same. Folkloric tradition has seen in civilized countries. Even the most industrial countries have saved their traditional frontlines (Tabibi, 1386:50).

One of the issues which must not be ignored in investigation and research about sociology and ethnology in rural areas is evaluation of common literature of the society which is under the study by the researchers. In this type of research, ethical and tribal characteristics in the platform of prose and poem (lyric and love couplets), songs and sonnets in local forms have been sung and said. These types of tribal culture have been counted as social pattern among

the masses of people which are very precious and are available in two forms: written and oral.

Folklore is interrelated with social and human science. From different fields of these science, folklore is related mostly with cultural or social ethnology which inquire about organs, systems, arts, literatures, and traditions of life tribes of the world and it relates to social linguistics. When we say that folklore is a part of culture, suddenly it relates to investigation of ethnology issues. Any humanitarian inquiry which does not pay about folklore, tribes or society deeply, the research would have represented imperfect image. Ethnology is a branch of social science and it is clear to all that in general the subject of study in social science is human, society and the same issues. It helps to know a huge part of human society through oral literature of that area. Ethnology is the study of culture of different societies in different times and places both in large and small societies who we know today. Culture is include of different issues such as traditions, ritually, oral discussions, folksy songs, legends, myths, songs and etc.

The Role and Importance of Oral Literature from Perspective of Ethnology

Oral literature is included of proverbs, patterns, rules, and etc. Patterns and rules of every nation and tribe is the source of research in cultural, social and political life of nations and tribes. Therefore, referring to wisdom speech of a tribe helps to know about exact soul of every society. It is not clear that when our parents and grandparents have created and saved wisdom speeches. Their hardworking in this field is counted as a huge heritage for their future generations and humanity. Sometimes, the concept which a short piece of sentence conveys, a huge volume of book cannot do it. Because a short phrase can be a wonderful conclusion of a speech, an abstract or summary of hours and hours talks (Jafar Qolyan, 1398:18).

To know individual personality and characteristics of someone, we can find it from his/her speech and phrases which he/she uses. Paying attention on someone's speech, the way of using phrases and words, can help to find about their thoughts and feelings. Based on that, it is easy to know culture and values of a nation or tribe. Therefore, to know the people of a society, tribe or nation exactly, you have to know their orals literature which is include of myths, legends, proverbs, fables, articles, couplets, and tales.

In the definition of ethnology, we have said that it is the science of studying about human culture. It was also mentioned that the aim of ethnology in studying about different ethnics and nations is to know about life style, traditions, habits and social condition of the people who live in large and small masses in remote areas with different cultures. So, through reviewing of their myths, proverbs, articles, couplets, tales and ..., it is easy to recognize their social life styles, traditions and social habits. Whatever has been mentioned indicates the importance of oral literature from perspective of ethnology. That is why without ethnology real understanding about masses is not possible.

Inquiry in public's culture is very important from point of view of ethnology; because literature and culture of a nation existed in memories of public people than recorded ones in form of books and articles. Public people have kept tales, proverbs, folksy songs, myths and etc which are very valuable documents that indicates moral, psychological, social, political life style of ancient people (Setodah, 1383:110). Proverbs, folksy songs, cruxes, myths, legends, and local tales are important part of public culture or oral literature as a valuable source for researchers.

By the help of folkloric relics which is ancient heritage of human as an image of their simple life, ethnologists can go deeper insight to know about their believes, thoughts, values, and social challenges and be aware of their cultural changes.

Through studying literal genres, it is easy to find the culture and traditions of a specific geography area. It is possible if there are enough awareness about ethnology from perspective of oral literature. That is why the researchers in this field have to know more about folklore and oral literature.

If a researcher wants to study about the way of thoughts, life style, reactions and interactions of a nation, oral literature can be a crystal source in this field. It is because that their writers are not specific people who have been affected of fame, income, ruler's pressure to make them satisfy. There is no fear and expectation of writers in this type of literature while in formal literature is possible. So, it can be claimed that oral literature is more honest than formal written literature which is affected from different dimensions.

Analyzing and comprehension in social, cultural, political and economic changes in the current societies is the responsibility of ethnologists. Ethnologist is able to disclose the changes which happens unconsciously in contemporary era. They are also able to recognize the effects of different social and cultural parties on each other. Ethnologists indicates difference of relationships among language and culture, believes, traditions, habits, power of structure, relative systems, and the relationship between products and consume in a clear and defined manner (Rewar, 1392:25). This is only possible to go deeper insight in oral speeches of a vernacular area.

Today, ethnology does not only belong to study and know about tribal life, but it is related to more civilized societies as well. Ethnology tries to introduce cultural phenomenon through collected information to the different societies. This is the way that paves the ground to know about traditions, culture, habits and general humanistic organizations (Tabibi, 1386:22).

Therefore, oral literature is an approach to know about traditions, culture, habits of different human categories which is possible through ethnology.

Oral literature has been risen from the depth context of the society which narrates pains, sorrows, troubles, and hardworking in the life of public people. It does not only remain in orals literature, but it also has been entered in written literature. Both oral and written literature have been effected from each other. For example, if someone address a famous quote from a royal whose name is unknown; this person belongs to public culture. If someone quotes from an identified figure who belongs to specific culture and his speech is the same as unknown writer (Sadat, 1377:.65).

Since our country Ariana for the first time, and then Khorasan had an ancient civilization; therefore, studying about oral literature is very important issue. It was different than the civilization of Greece and Mesopotamia which were in written form. They used to write down their believes, thoughts, knowledge, arts in a single speech, symbols, pictures, gestures, lines, colors or sometimes in oral form as myths, fables, legends, tales, folksy songs, and etc. unfortunately, the literary treasure of this homeland is not available in the written form as other civilizations are. To find the cultural secrets of this country along the history, it needs more inquiry and investigations of ethnologist.

CONCLUSION

As a result, it can be said that oral literature conveys traditions, culture, believes, thoughts and original intellectual possession of vernacular masses. People has fables, myths, legends, folksy songs, cruxes in their minds and tongues which carry out a huge meaning and they can be as valid documents which reflect moral, psychological, social, and political values in the life of ancient and contemporary people. Ethnology is used to recognize tribes, folks, and masses of an area. To achieve this goal, folksy songs, local proverbs, cruxes, cradle songs, myths, legends are important parts of oral literature and source for ethnologist researchers.

As a result, oral literature has a key role in ethnology that without it, real knowing about a tribe or a nation is not simply possible.

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